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Golf Club Carrier

The present invention relates to equipment for storing and transporting elongated objects such as golf clubs.

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Golf clubs are normally carried around a golf course in a bag in which the clubs are placed, which bag can be carried or mounted on a trolley etc. When the bag is carried, the weight of the bag adds considerably to the weight to be carried and when the clubs are placed in a car boot or similar transport the bag takes up a considerable amount of space.

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Devices have been proposed for organising and carrying fishing rods and US Patent 5678348 discloses such a device. However, such a device is not suitable for carrying golf clubs around a golf course where the clubs have to be put down between each shot. In such a device, with the rods held all around the circumference of the device, golf clubs would come into contact with the ground and on slopes the device would roll away. There is also no provision for holding balls, tees, valuables etc.

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US patent 5669514 discloses a golf club holder with two separated discs with U shaped cut outs by which golf clubs can be held. The discs are held together by a rigid tube. Such a device is complex to assemble and disassemble and can have difficulty accommodating a range of golf club sizes, e.g. from junior sets to full size sets and in use must be used in an upright position otherwise the clubs lay on the ground. If the holder is upright a spike is required which can damage the course and is not acceptable.

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US patent 4616749 discloses a carrier in which there is only one holder and, in practice, it would be very difficult to hold the clubs. This device is only disclosed for holding four clubs and clearly could not be used with anything approaching a full set. Although the handles are held clear of the ground, the end of clubs are not, resulting in the risk of mud, grass etc. getting on the club face and affecting the shot.

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In order to overcome these disadvantages I have devised a means for readily transporting golf clubs which takes up very little space and is light in weight and holds the clubs and the handles clear of the ground in use.

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According to the invention there is provided a carrying device for golf clubs which device comprises at least two rigid frames each of which has, around its periphery, a plurality of holding means adapted to detachably hold a golf club so that, when two of
5 the said frames are spaced apart and one or more of the golf clubs held in corresponding holding means in each of the frames, a substantially rigid or semi rigid structure is formed with there being no fixed connector connecting the frames.

The holding means is preferably in the form of a shaped indentation in the periphery
10 of the frame of dimensions such that when the golf club to be carried is placed in the indentation it is held as a tight fit by the natural resilience of the material. As golf clubs are substantially circular a suitable shape for the indentation is in the form of a circle of appropriate diameter with part of the circumference being narrower than the width of the club so that the club can be inserted through the gap and pressure held;
15 this type of holding is often referred to as 'snap fit'. Alternatively U shaped indentations can be cut in the outside of the frames.

When the device is to be used for carrying golf clubs the rigid frame preferably has at least fourteen holding means to accommodate the maximum number of clubs
20 permitted, although there can be additional holding means to hold such items as ball retrievers etc.

The frame is preferably made of a plastics material such as a rigid polyvinylchloride, polypropylene, polycarbonate, polyurethane, nylon etc. or similar polymer or
25 copolymer.

In order to increase its rigidity there can be a raised lip around the periphery of each frame which acts as a strengthener for the frame.

Preferably at least one part of each frame protrudes beyond golf clubs held in the frame so that when the frame is placed on the ground the said protruding part of the frames holds the clubs clear of the ground. This protruding part of the frame has no holding means for the golf clubs so that no clubs are in contact with the ground. The holding means are positioned around part of the frame so that the clubs are held well
30 clear of the ground.
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Preferably in the frame there are means for holding one or more golf balls, tees pencils, score cards, pitch repairers etc. which may be required by a golfer. There can also be means for holding a bag for storing valuables and money and means whereby a strap can be attached. If an umbrella is to be carried then there can be a separate arrangement for storing it.

A bag or pouch can be held between the frames which can be closed, e.g. by a zip or by "Velcro" (RTM). This pouch can contain refreshments, waterproofs, valuables etc.

The frames should be a sufficient distance apart to hold the clubs firmly but preferably the grips are clear of the frame so only the shafts are held.

In use, two of the frames, which preferably are of substantially the same shape, are spaced apart and a golf club inserted into the corresponding holding means in each frame positioned so that the shaft of the club is held; further clubs are then added until all the clubs are in position. The device then forms a rigid structure which can be picked up and carried around. In play, when a club is required, it is removed for use and the other clubs hold the structure rigid. After use the club can easily be replaced.

The weight of the structure is the weight of the clubs etc. plus the weight of the two frames and thus is considerably lighter than carrying clubs in a bag. For transporting the clubs in a car boot, the clubs can be removed from the device and the two frames then take up very little room over and above the room taken by the clubs.

Although there is no fixed connector connecting the frames, i.e. attached to each frame, there can optionally be detachable supports connecting the frames, e.g. by having further holding means in each frame which can grip support rods.

For use in wet weather there can be an overall cover which can be placed around the device to protect the clubs.

The invention is described further in the accompanying drawings in which

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Fig. 1 is an isometric view of the assembled device with golf clubs etc. in position.

Fig. 2 is a plan view of one frame.

Fig. 3 is an enlarged view of the holding means of fig. 2.

5 Fig. 4 is a plan view of a frame with a reinforcing lip.

Figs. 5 and 6 are views showing protection and

Fig. 7 shows carrying arrangements.

10 Referring to figs 1, 2 and 4, a rigid frame (1) has a series of snap fit type holding means (7) positioned around its periphery. There are holes (4) which can hold golf balls and holes (6) for tees. In fig 1 there is a strap (5) by which the assembled device can be carried. There are pockets (3) attached to one frame for storing items and a central holder for holding an umbrella. The part of each frame (11) and (12) protrudes beyond the clubs as shown and so the clubs are held clear of the ground.

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In use one plate (1) is placed on the ground in the upright position with the section (12) resting on the ground. A club is inserted in a holder (7), preferably a longer club which is inserted at a holder nearer the ground; the other frame is then positioned and the club placed in a holder so that the two frames are parallel. The rest of the golf clubs are inserted in each frame as shown in fig. (1) and are held tight in the snap fit holding means (7) shown in detail in fig. (3). Balls are positioned in holes (4) and strap (5) attached. A pouch (17) (fig. 7) can be suspended between the frames if required, to carry waterproofs, valuables etc. Thus the clubs can be easily carried and used. In play the holder can be placed on the ground and the clubs are held clear of the ground, the club required selected and the stroke played.

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Unlike the known carriers there is no risk of the handles or clubs coming into contact with the ground.

30 In fig. 4 the raised lip (8) gives added strength to the plate (1).

As shown in fig. 5, an all over cover (9) can be placed around the clubs for protection from the rain etc.

35 As shown in fig. 6 the cover can have a hinged lid (15) which opens as shown at (14).

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In fig. 7 the carrying pouch (17) is shown suspended between the plates (1).

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